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THE
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
BOARD OF AGENTS

OF THE

BRONSON LIBRARY FUND,

WATERBURY, CONN.

1874-5.

HARTFORD:
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1875.

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OFFICERS
OF THE
SILAS BRONSON LIBRARY,

October 1st, 1875.

President.

WILLARD SPENCER.

Secretary.

THEODORE I. DRIGGS.

Treasurer.

FREDERICK J. KINGSBURY.

Board of Agents.

TERM EXPIRES.

NELSON J. WELTON and NATHAN DIKEMAN,	July 4, 1876
CALVIN H. CARTER and T. I. DRIGGS,	" 4, 1878
F. J. KINGSBURY and T. D. DOUGHERTY,	" 4, 1880
D. F. MALTBY and J. HOBART BRONSON,	" 4, 1882
WILLARD SPENCER and S. W. KELLOGG,	" 4, 1884
LUCIEN S. BRONSON and JOHN KENDRICK,	" 4, 1886

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

During the year now ended, the Library has gone on in its quiet and instructive way, nothing having arisen to disturb its usefulness or interfere with its steady growth.

The Library Committee have added as many new books as the state of the funds would permit, and allow the increase necessary to insure in due time an enlargement of our quarters. This can not be long delayed, and, inasmuch as our funds have increased \$14,250 since the Library was opened, there would seem to be no hindrance to a commencement of this work very soon. Frederick R. Sanford still receives the benefit of the Holmes Scholarship, in the Academic department of Yale College, and, E. L. White having graduated at the last commencement, the Scholarship in the Scientific department is now vacant.

On the 4th of July, 1876, the term of office of Nelson J. Welton and Nathan Dikeman will expire, and it will be necessary at the next city election, to elect those who are to succeed them in the Board of Agents.

It will be seen by the report of the Librarian, that the Library continues to be appreciated by the people, and who shall count the great good it does, or say how much is its influence in shaping the future of Waterbury? For full particulars of the last year's history, we refer to the following report of the Librarian.

T. I. DRIGGS,

Secretary.

Waterbury, October 1, 1875.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT.

To the Board of Agents of the Silas Bronson Library:

GENTLEMEN:—I herewith submit the Annual Report on the condition of the Bronson Library for the year ending August 31st, 1875.

There were in the Library at the close of the last fiscal year, 17,807 bound volumes, exclusive of duplicates.

There have been added during the year, 1,619 volumes, making a total of 19,426.

The additions have been published as follows, viz:—

American Books,	763 vols.
Foreign "	770 "
American Periodicals, bound,	43 "
Foreign " "	43 "
Total.	<u>1,619</u> "

The binding of forty or fifty volumes of periodicals has been delayed by changes in our City Bindery.

Of the above, 33 volumes were gifts, and 55 pamphlets have also been presented to the Library. Sixty pamphlets have been added by purchase, making a total of 115. Some progress in cataloguing and classifying the pamphlets in the Library has been made, but the work is not yet completed.

An examination of the supplementary catalogue just published, (including all the books purchased from the 1st of June, 1874, to the 1st of August, 1875,) will show that a very large part of these books are such as have a permanent value.

I invite your special attention to this fact, for an impression prevails to some extent, that far too large a part of the books in

the Library are light, trashy novels—books that, if not actually bad, are nearly worthless. A comparison of our catalogue with those of other free public Libraries, shows that ours contains a smaller proportion of such books than most others.

Determined to know just what proportion of our books belongs to the class of fiction, I have found by actual count, that a little less than twenty-one per cent. are novels and juveniles, and of the books purchased during the last year, only seventeen and one-third per cent. belong to the class in question.

It is safe to say that the entire cost of this class of books, including duplicates and the replacing of copies for those that are worn out, does not exceed fifteen per cent. of the entire amount expended in the purchase of books. This surely is not too large a share to expend for the pleasure of those whose severe daily toil unfits them for the perusal of books that require thoughtful attention, but who find rest and recreation for their evening hours, in the reading of a well told tale.

In nearly all free public Libraries, works of fiction form from seventy-five to eighty per cent. of the books drawn out. In our own, the past year, such works make nearly seventy-nine per cent. of the entire circulation.

It will be seen that twenty-one per cent. of the books in the Library really furnish seventy-nine per cent. of the reading. At least four-fifths of the books purchased have been selected with special reference to their permanent and intrinsic value. This shows that the committee to whom the important matter of selecting books is intrusted, aim, through the influence of the Library, to elevate and improve the literary tastes of our people.

The only really serious charge that I have heard urged against the Library is, that it furnishes for our youth so large an amount of light reading.

Reading juveniles to the extent that some do is a very great evil, but the Library is in no just sense responsible for this abuse of it. These same books for the young, if read in moderate amount, would in no way injure any well-balanced mind.

Parents and guardians are the parties on whom blame rests, if anywhere, and I here repeat what I said on this point in my last report; that it is their duty to determine the kind and amount of reading their children shall have, and to say whether

they shall have a proper amount of solid and wholesome intellectual food, or may feed wholly and at will upon literary sweetmeats.

Some parents leave the selection of books for their children to the Librarian. This duty is always cheerfully performed to the fullest extent that other duties will allow.

It is to be hoped that the recent educational movements in our city may have the effect, not only to improve all our schools, but to call into greater use the stores of valuable knowledge contained in our Reference Library.

It is true that the use of the Reference Library is at present attended with some inconveniences ; but teachers and pupils, and all others who wish to avail themselves of its use, may feel free to do so, and shall receive all possible attention and assistance from the Librarian and his assistants.

Let the Bronson Library realize at once, and to the fullest extent, the idea of its generous founder, "*the promotion of the education and intelligence, and general information of the inhabitants of the City of Waterbury, and the encouragement and sustenance of good order and sound morals.*"

The following is a list of some of the more important books purchased during the past year :—

Allison's History of Europe, fine edition, 15 vols. 8°.
Atlases of the Counties of Conn. and the State of Rhode Island, 8 vols. folio.
Baird, Brewer & Ridgeway's Birds of North America. Land Birds, 3 vols. 8°.
Colored Plates. The most complete Work on the Land Birds of America, yet published. Three vols. on the Water Birds will complete the Work.
Bentham's Works, complete, best edition, 11 vols. 8°.
Boydell's Illustrations of Shakespeare, folio, 1803. A fine copy.
Carlyle's Collected Works, Author's edition, 34 vols. 8°.
Catlin's American Indians, London edition.
Charlevoix's History of New France, 6 vols. 4°.
The Contemporary Review, 17 vols. 8°, completing the set to 1873.
Delamotte's Art of Sketching from Nature, 4°, 1871.
Duchenne's Mecanisme de la Physiognomie Humaine, 8°.
Duyckinck's Gallery of Eminent Americans, 2 vols. 4°.
Edwards' Butterflies of North America, vol. 1. 4°.
Galerie du Musee de France, 10 vols. 8°.
Garcia's Origen de los Indios, de la Nuevo Mundo, 1729, folio.
Baronial Halls of England, 2 vols. 4°.
S. C. Hall's Selected Pictures, very fine Engravings, India proofs, 4 vols. folio.
Hamerton's Examples of Modern Etching, 1875, folio.
Harriss's Bibliotheca Americana Vetusissima, 4°.

Herrera's Hist. General des Indies Occidental, 1660, 3 vols. 4°.

Hogarth, Original Plates, retouched by Heath, fine copy, folio.

Hotten's List of Emigrants to New England, 4°.

Keller's Amazon and Madeira Rivers.

Latham's Descriptive Ethnology, 2 vols. 8°.

LeMoigne's Expedition to Florida in 1564, 4°. Heliotypes of the Engravings from the Artist's Original Drawings.

LeRoy's Ruines de la Grece, 1 vol. folio.

Liancourt's Voyage dans les Etats Unis D'Amerique, Paris, 1779, 9 v. 8° & folio.

London Illustrated News, 20 vols. folio ; completing the set.

Mætzner's English Grammar ; a new work ; the "best extant," 3 vols. 8°.

Maginn's Gallery of Illustrious Literary Characters, 1 vol. 4°.

Marcoy's Travels in South America, 2 vols. 4°.

Marmontel, Les Incas, ou la Destruction de L'Empire du Perou, Paris, 1777.

Maximilian, Prinz zu Weid, Reise nach Nord Amerika, 2 vols. 4°.

Molesworth's History of England, 3 vols. 8°.

Morton's Crania Americana, folio. A rare and valuable work.

Pinelo's Bibliotheca Oriental y Occidental, Madrid, 1737, folio.

Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 22 vols. 8°; complete to 1874.

Reynolds' System of Medicine, 3 vols. 8°.

Roberts' Egypt and Nubia, 2 vols. folio. Completing his great work, Egypt, Nubia, and the Holy Land, in four fine folio volumes.

Scammon's Marine Mammals of the North-West Coast of North America, 1 vol. 4°.

Scott's Novels complete, in German, 25 vols.

Smith's Historical Atlas of Ancient Geography, folio ; now complete.

Specifications and Drawings of Patents, 12 vols. 8°. There are now 89 volumes of this valuable work in the Library.

Spencer's Descriptive Sociology, 2 parts, folio.

Stiles' History of the Three Judges. A rare book.

Tripp's British Mosses, 2 vols. 4°, colored plates.

Trumbull's History of Connecticut, 2 vols. 8°. From the library of the late Dr. Field. Presented by Miss Charlotte Merriman.

Yarrell's British Fishes, 2 vols. 8°.

The above list will give some idea of the variety and value of the books lately added to the Library.

The Library has been open during the entire year, with the exception of Sundays and four legal holidays, the annual examination having been performed by the aid of a little extra help, without interfering with the drawing of books.

The total number of volumes given out during the year was 63,008,—4,767 less than the previous year.

Dividing the year into three equal parts, it is found that there was an increase over the previous year in the first and last third, and that the decrease began with January first. Would that we could believe that the scandal literature published in the daily press during this period had nothing to do with this decrease.

The daily average was 204 volumes, against 220 last year.

The number of new names enrolled to draw books was 535.

Total number now enrolled, 5,710.

The amount of fines collected was \$277.38.

The number of volumes worn out and thrown aside was 99, and was, as usual, made up almost entirely of works of fiction.

Of the twenty-nine volumes reported lost, in my last report, four have since been found, leaving twenty-five still missing.

The annual examination was this year necessarily deferred more than two months, or until the middle of August. Of the missing books nearly fifty volumes remain unaccounted for, but the actual loss will not much exceed that of last year.

Only two volumes are missing from the Law Library, and these are probably held by some one not acquainted with the special rules relating to the use of books in this department. The missing volumes are "Ewald's Constitution of Great Britain," and "Story on the Constitution."

Since my last report, two fine large cases have been made, and are now filled with the most valuable of the folios and quartos belonging to the Library.

There is pressing need of more shelf room for the books now in the Library, and I would suggest that temporary and inexpensive shelving be put up, instead of the heavy cases hitherto built.

By close economy of space, the purchases of the coming year may be provided for, but the question to be met immediately, is, whether to erect a new building or stop buying books.

The furnace put in last fall for heating the building, has exceeded our expectations, heating the lower rooms last winter, very comfortably, save on two or three exceptionally cold and windy days.

Calls are often made in the Reading Rooms for papers not on our list. Several of these papers are desirable, but there is too little room for those we now have.

The gentlemen's Reading Room is much crowded during the evening, for at least half the year.

We have too little help to enable us to properly attend to these rooms in the evenings, and the calls for books and magazines are much less than if the wants of readers were promptly attended to.

The change in the hours of opening and closing the Library, seems to give good satisfaction.

Additional information in regard to the circulation of books, and a list of those who have donated books and pamphlets to the Library, will be found in Appendixes A and B.

H. F. BASSETT, *Librarian.*

APPENDIX A.

Books taken from the Library for the year ending August 31, 1875,
compared with the circulation for the year ending

August 31, 1874:

		1875.	1874.
First Quarter, ending Nov. 30, 1874,		15,194	14,041
Second " " Feb. 28, 1875,		17,248	22,236
Third " " May 31, 1875,		17,294	18,695
Fourth " " Aug. 31, 1875,		13,272	12,795
Total,		63,008	67,767

Books and Periodicals used in the Reading Rooms:

First Quarter, Books,	1,122
" " Periodicals,	104
Second Quarter, Books,	2,428
" " Periodicals,	47
Third Quarter, Books,	1,232
" " Periodicals,	57
Fourth Quarter, Books,	537
" " Periodicals,	28
Total of Books and Periodicals, . . .	5,555

Classified List of Books taken from the Library, and also the proportion which each class bears to the whole,
for the last two years:

	1874-5.	1873-4.
Prose Fiction,	34,470	53.1
Juveniles,	15,024	25.6
General Literature,	5,920	9.4
Science,	1,458	2.3
History,	1,532	2.4
Travels,	1,953	3.1
Biography,	1,042	1.6
Pol. Economy and Law,	436	.7
Religion,	453	.7
French and German,	704	1.1

APPENDIX B.

DONATIONS TO THE LIBRARY, 1874-5.

DONOR.	VOLS.	PAMPHLETS.
Anderson, Rev. J.	9	
Bassett, H. F.	7	
Beardsley Library,	1	
Benedict, Mrs. Fannie J.	1	
Blake, Prof.	1	
Boston Public Library,	1	6
Boughton, Hon. H. I.	1	
Briggs, G. C.	1	
Brookline Public Library,	1	
Brooklyn Mercantile Library Association,	1	
Brown, Hon. Wm.	1	
Bunnell, H. H.	1	
Bureau of Education,	1	
Carter, C. H.	1	
Chicago Public Library,	1	
Chipman, Hosmer & Co.,	1	
Cobden Club,	1	
Dikeman, Nathan	5	
Fall River Public Library,	1	
Hillard, W. C.	2	
Judd & White,	1	
Kingsbury, F. J.,	4	
Kirtland, Dr. J. P.	1	
Lawrence Public Library,	1	
Leavitt & Co.,	1	
Lee, John W. M.	1	
Mercantile Library Co., Philadelphia,	2	
Merrill, C. B.	1	
Merriman, Miss	2	
Milton Public Library,	1	
Peabody Institute,	2	
Roberts, Dr. J. R.	1	
Robertson Association,	1	

DONOR.	VOLS.	PAMPHLETS.
Seymour, Frederick W.	1	
Smithsonian Institution,	3	3
Spencer, F. A.	1	
Stevens, B. F.	1	
United States Government,	2	2
United States Life Insurance Co.,	1	
Welton, Mrs. N. J.	3	
White, L. S.	2	
Yale College,		2
Young Men's Association, Buffalo, N. Y.,	1	
Young Men's Institute, Hartford, Conn.,	1	
	31	56

TREASURER'S REPORT.

F. J. KINGSBURY, TREASURER, in account with BRONSON LIBRARY FUND.

<i>Dr.</i>	<i>Cr.</i>
On hand at last report, \$491.05	Loans made on Mortgage, \$33,000.00
Received for Interest, 13,437.67	Bonds bought, 2,000.00
Rent, 450.00	Paid Orders as follows:—
Fines, 277.38	Books, \$4,431.27
Books, Catalogues, and Papers sold, 111.35	Binding, 668.09
Loans paid, 8,500.00	Building repairs, 24.54
Bonds sold, 23,000.00	Catalogues, 53.08
	Expense account, 112.80
	Fuel and Lights, 820.61
	Furniture, 616.97
	Insurance, 188.00
	Labor, 3,437.72
	Papers & Periodicals, 261.35
	Printing, 52.90
	Stationery, 9.50
	Transportation, 69.86—10,746.69
	Balance on hand, 520.76
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\$46,267.45	\$46,267.45

The Principal is invested as follows:

Waterbury City Bonds,	\$87,000.00
Notes secured by Mortgage,	101,000.00
Real Estate,	14,250.00
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	\$202,250.00

Respectfully submitted.

F. J. KINGSBURY, *Treasurer.*

Waterbury, October 1, 1875.

